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**State Fire Marshal Offers Recipe for Fire Safety During
Fire Prevention Week, October 8-14, 2006**

Prevent Cooking Fires, Watch What you Heat

It's time for Fire Prevention Week, and from October 8-14 State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan is joining forces with fire departments across the state to remind local residents to *Prevent Cooking Fires: Watch What You Heat*. During this year's fire safety campaign, firefighters and safety advocates will be spreading the word about the dangers of cooking fires--most of which result from unattended cooking—and teaching local residents how to prevent cooking fires from starting in the first place.

According to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System there were 7,326 fires in Massachusetts involving cooking that caused three deaths, 90 injuries, 26 firefighter injuries and \$6.9 million in property damage. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires. Cooking fires are also the leading cause of home fire-related injuries.

Coan said, "Unattended cooking is the most frequent cause of cooking fires. We have to cook to eat everyday, so we urge cooks to 'stand by their pans'. We hope that Fire Prevention Week will help us reach folks in the community to prevent these kinds of fires and to learn to react appropriately to stove-top fire by putting a lid on it."

Among the safety tips that firefighters and safety advocates will be emphasizing:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling, or boiling food. If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- When you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.
- Fire educators recommend putting a lid on cooking fires and turning off the heat. Moving a flaming pan easily spreads the fire to people, cabinets and other kitchen areas.

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- If you have young children, use the stove's back burners whenever possible. Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting sleeves.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper and plastic bags, towels, and anything else that can burn, away from your stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and stovetops.

Coan added, "Make sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home and hold a fire drill at home to practice your home escape plan."